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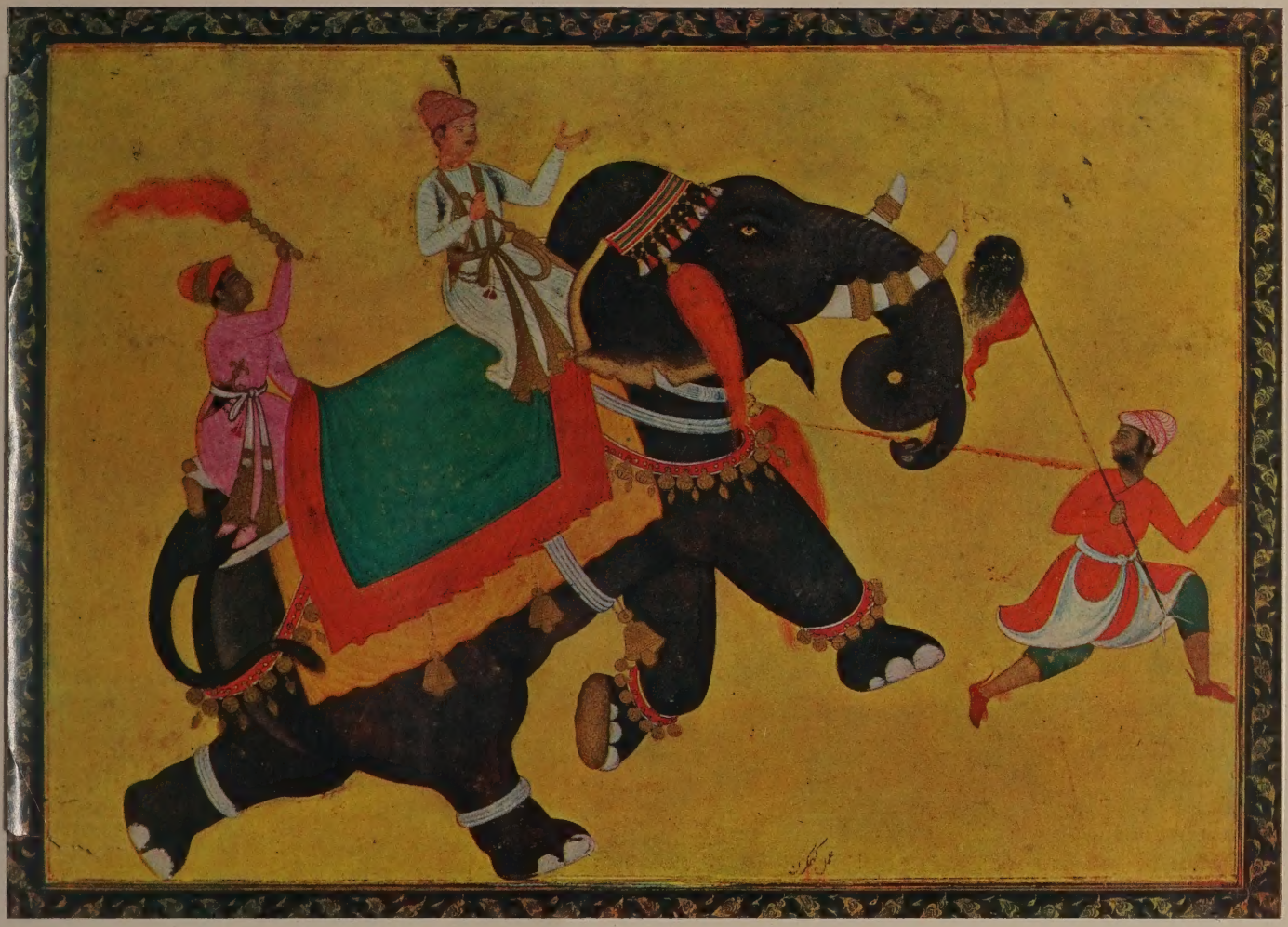

MAURICE DIMAND

INDIAN MINIATURES

INDIAN MINIATURE PAINTINGS

Text by
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CROWN PUBLISHERS, INC. ◂ NEW YORK

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Mughal school, period of Akbar, about 1600
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The majority of the paintings done by court artists of Akbar were book illustrations. Occasionally we find single miniatures, which were particularly favored by the court artists of Akbar's successors, Jahangir and Shah Jahan.

This miniature representing a prince riding an elephant and accompanied by a servant with a flywhisk was painted by a well known court artist of Akbar and comes most probably from an album.

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SEA FIGHT
Detail of a miniature painting in the album of Shah Jahangir, Mughal, period of Babur (1526-1530)
State Library, Berlin, West Germany

The art of painting in India has a long history. The Buddhist caves of Ajanta, Bagh, and Sigiriya are famous for magnificent frescoes dating from the sixth and seventh centuries. From mediaeval India we have miniature paintings belonging to the Pala school of Bengal from the eleventh and twelfth centuries. They are painted on palm leaves and illustrate various religious texts. Of importance to the history of Indian painting is the Gujarati school of Western India. Most of the manuscripts are of religious character illustrating Jaina texts, but there are also secular ones in existence which are of particular importance. The Gujarati school, which reached its height in the fifteenth century, continued into the sixteenth century.

The conquest of Hindustan (1526) by Babur, a descendent in the fifth generation from Timur or Tamerlane, brought Persian art and culture to India (which includes the present day Pakistan). Babur (1526-30), the founder of the Mughal dynasty, was known as a learned philosopher, a wide traveler and lover of nature. Like his Persian ancestors, the Timurid princes, Babur showed great interest in the art of painting and had a large collection of illuminated Persian manuscripts, illustrated by famous painters of the Herat school, including Bihzad and his pupils.

Babur's son and successor, Humayun (1530-1556), was forced in 1540 by an Afghan revolt to seek refuge first in Sind and then in Persia. While in Persia he was the guest of Shah Tahmasp in Tabriz, where he became acquainted with the work of some of the famous Persian painters of the 16th century. At the court of Shah Tahmasp, Humayun met two young artists, Mir Sayyid Ali and Abdus Samád, who were invited to join his court. Mir Sayyid Ali, upon whom Humayun bestowed the title of Nadir al-Mulk (The Marvel of the Realm), was engaged to illustrate the Persian Romance of Amir Hamza, an uncle of Muhammad. The manuscript, although begun under Humayun, was actually completed in the time of his successor, Emperor Akbar (1556-1605).

Akbar the Great was an extraordinary personality who not only consolidated the political power of his empire, but also greatly influenced the artistic and cultural life of India. He was tolerant of other races and religions. The native Rajputs were employed by Akbar in the administration and the army. He favored marriages between Mughals and Hindu women and two of his own wives were Rajput princesses.

Akbar was very much interested in various manifestations of the human mind. He showed great interest in other religions, particularly Hinduism and Christianity. In 1578 Akbar requested the Portuguese authorities of Goa to send him missionaries and with them Holy Books, especially the Gospels. A party of Jesuits consisting of Fathers Rudolfo Aquaviva and Antonio Monserate, arrived in Fathpur Sikri in March, 1580, and presented Akbar with a copy of Plantin's Bible, with engravings by Flemish artists, and two beautiful paintings representing Christ and the Virgin Mary.

The great monument of Akbar's time is the palace city of Fathpur Sikri, which was begun in 1569 and finished fifteen years later. His palaces were sumptuously decorated with mural paintings by Persian and Indian artists. In Fathpur Sikri Akbar established an atelier near his palace, containing workrooms for the arts of painting, goldwork, weaving and the manufacture of arms. Abul-Fazl, the historian, and friend of the Emperor, gives us in his Ain-i-Akbari or Institutions of Akbar, a vivid account of Akbar's great interest in the art of painting. " His Majesty, from his earliest youth, has shown a great predilection for this art, and gives it every encouragement, as he looks upon it as a means, both of study and amusement. Hence the art flourishes, and many painters have obtained great reputation. The works of all painters are weekly laid before His Majesty by the Daroghahs and the clerks; he then confers rewards according to excellence of workmanship, or increases the monthly salaries... Most excellent painters are now to be found, and masterpieces, worthy of Bihzad, may be placed at the side of the wonderful works of the European painters who have attained world-wide fame. The minuteness of detail, the general finish, the boldness of execution, etc., now observed in pictures, are incomparable; even inanimate objects look as if they had life." Well known is Akbar's opinion on painting in contrast to that of the strict Muhammadans: " Bigoted followers of the letter of the law are hostile to the art of painting; but their eyes now see the truth." One day at a private party of friends, His Majesty, who had conferred on several the pleasure of drawing near him, remarked: " There are many that hate painting; but such men I dislike. It appears to me as if a painter had quite peculiar means of recognizing God; for a painter in sketching anything that has life, and in devising its limbs, one after the other, must come to feel that he cannot bestow individuality upon his work, and is thus forced to think of God, the Giver of life, and will thus increase in knowledge."

Mir Sayyid Ali and Abdus Samad, brought to India by Humayun, continued to be chief painters in Akbar's Library, where more than a hundred painters were engaged to illustrate Persian and other manuscripts. Most of these painters were Hindus from Kashmir, Gujarat and Punjab, who brought with them the traditions of local native schools. Among the foremost Hindu artists of Akbar were Daswanth, Basawan and Lal. Daswanth was a pupil of Abdus Samad and according to Ain-i-Akbari, in a short time he surpassed all painters and became the first master of the age. Basawan is also highly praised by Abul Fazl: "In backgrounding, drawing of features, distribution of colors, portrait painting, and several other branches, he is most excellent, so much so, that many critics prefer him to Daswanth."

Besides the Persian classics Akbar was greatly interested in historical works dealing with the history of the World, of the Mongols, the house of Timur and the Mughals. Several copies of the Akbar-nama (Book of Akbar) written by Akbar's minister Abul Fazl, were profusely illustrated for the Emperor's own use. Many scholars were engaged in translations from the Sanskrit into Persian. Abul Fazl translated the Kalilah wa Dimnah under the title of "Ayar-i-Danish" from Arabic into Persian. The Hindu epic Mahabharata has been translated into Persian, under the title of "Razmnama, the Book of Wars." The copy which was presented to the Emperor is now in the Jaipur Library and contains 169 full page miniatures signed by many of the most famous court painters of Akbar. Other Hindu works translated into Persian were the Ramayana and the love story of Nala and Damayanti.

Akbar was very fond of romantic stories such as Amir Hamza, which contained 360 tales. He had the wonderful incidents of that story illustrated from beginning to end of the book and set up in twelve volumes containing a hundred folios each. Fifty painters of Bihzad-like pencil were engaged, at first under the superintendence of Sayyid 'Ali of Tabriz and afterwards under the superintendence of Khwaja Abdus Samad of Shiraz.

The large illustrations to Amir Hamza measure 22 in. × 28½ in. and were painted on cotton cloth. The paintings show all the characteristic features of the early Akbar school and were probably executed about 1575. From the original number of 1400 illustrations, not many survived. The largest number, sixty-one, are in the Austrian Museum for Art and Industry in Vienna, and twenty-five are in the South Kensington Museum in London. In the United States there are about fifteen Amir Hamza paintings of which five are in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, others in the Brooklyn Museum and other collections.

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The Persian style and conventions derived from the Herat and Bukhara schools are quite apparent in the composition, architecture, ornament and color scheme. On the other hand the figures, landscape and some of the buildings are Indian and show the influence of Rajput paintings. The paintings of Amir Hamza often show different hands and it is quite probable that a single painting was the product of two or three artists. Such a procedure was quite common in the atelier of Akbar as is evident from the inscriptions on a number of miniatures. Some of the painters were responsible for the composition and outlines, others for portraits, execution and coloring.

Of great importance for the formation of the Mughal style of painting was the contact of Akbar's court painters with European art. From European paintings, the Hindu painters learned about perspective and modeling. They introduced third dimensional landscapes and new color schemes, unknown to Persian painters. In some of the miniatures illustrating episodes from Persian poems the Mughal artists introduced Portuguese figures and even Christian saints.

The formation of the Mughal style was the creation of all the artists working for Akbar. The atelier developed certain conventions and types of figures which appear in paintings by various artists like Lal and others. Few of the painters of the Akbar school show an individual style. Among the best known ones is Basawan, a pupil of Abdus Samad, whose style is often free from Persian conventions and color schemes. His miniatures often show a palette of pastel colors, softness of delineation and shading which reflect the European influence.

Jahangir (1605-1627), the son and successor of Akbar, showed just as great interest in the art of painting as his father. He collected illuminated Persian manuscripts, albums of paintings and European paintings. He sent special agents to Persia and other countries to acquire manuscripts and works of art. In the manuscripts which came into his library he wrote personal comments about their value and the artists. Jahangir regarded himself as quite a connoisseur of paintings and in his Memoirs writes as follows:

" As regards myself, my liking for painting and my practice in judging it have arrived at such a point that when any work is brought to me, either of deceased artists or those of the present day, without the names being told me, I say on the spur of the moment that it is the work of such and such a man. And if there be a picture containing many portraits, and each face be the work of a different master, I can discover which face is the work of each of them. If any other person has put in the eye and eyebrow of a face, I can perceive whose work the original face is, and who has painted the eye and eyebrow."

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Many of Akbar's court painters, such as Abu'l-Hasan, Bishandas, Farrukh Beg, Dawlat, Govardhan, Anant, Manohar and others continued to work for Jahangir. He was particularly enthusiastic about Abu'l Hasan, the son of the Persian painter Aka Riza, of Herat. According to Jahangir, Abu'l Hasan was a better painter than his father, whom the Emperor engaged while still a prince. " He was honored with the title of Nadir az-Zaman (Marvel of the Age) because he drew the picture of my accession as the frontispiece to the Jahangir-nama and brought it to me. As it was worthy of all praise, he received endless favors. His work was perfect, and his picture is one of the chefs-d'oeuvre of the age. At the present time he has no equal or rival." Aka Riza or Muhammad Riza painted in the traditional Persian style which may be seen in several illustrations to the MS. of Anvar i Suhaili or the Lights of Canopus (dated 1610), a book of Indian Fables in the British Museum. The traditional Persian style or manner was practised by several other court painters, among them Farrukh Beg, the Kalmak, and two new painters from Samarkand, Muhammad Nadir and Muhammad Murad, both excellent portrait painters, especially in the process of black outline which may be compared to sepia or a cameo. Of Bishandas the Emperor had also a high opinion: " He was unequalled in his age for taking likenesses." In 1617 Jahangir selected Bishandas to accompany a mission to Persia to paint the portraits of the Shah and the chief men of his state. His work pleased

Jahangir who remarked upon his return that he had drawn most of them, and especially the Shah, exceedingly well. As a reward Bishandas received a gift of an elephant.

Jahangir's tastes inclined more to paintings representing events in his life and portraits than to book illustrations of Persian or Indian classics. On his travels Jahangir was always accompanied by two or three painters in order to record events of importance. Jahangir was also a great lover of nature and ordered such artists as Mansur and Murad to paint the more beautiful specimens of birds, animals and flowers. Mansur painted also about a hundred different flowers of Kashmir where Jahangir spent many happy days.

Painting of the Jahangir school was a courtly and aristocratic art, concerned chiefly with portraiture and ceremonial scenes or durbars. There are many fine portraits of the Emperor, the princes, and court officials painted by such artists as Abu'l Hasan, Bishandas, Govardhan, Balchand, Bichitr and Hashim. The pictures of Durbars or scenes of audience and the likenesses of all important court officials were preserved for posterity in albums made for the Emperor. Technically these portraits painted by the court artists of Jahangir and later of Shah Jahan are among the finest examples of miniature art known. They are painted with great care, love of detail, and fineness of drawing and modeling, for the purpose of producing a likeness in the European sense. In some of these portraits the Emperor himself was often glorified as the supreme ruler and conqueror. Many of his portraits were given by the Emperor to all high officials and ambassadors who came to the court. In order to produce these fine portraits the artists had made many sketches from life. The costumes and accessories are painted just as carefully as the features of the person.

Of Jahangir's contact with Western art we have an interesting account in the letters of the English ambassador, Sir Thomas Roe, who spent four years (1615-1619) at the Mughal court, and had many interesting conversations far into the night on painting and art in general. Like his father, Jahangir liked European paintings with religious subjects, which had to be explained to him. In a letter to the East India Company, dated November 27, 1615, Sir Thomas requested them to send paintings of higher quality because the emperor and the court appreciated only the best work, such as the paintings from Italy. He added that the Indian connoisseurs understood painting just as well as the English and criticized the paintings which came from England.

Jahangir was not only fond of religious pictures but also of those with mythological subjects. According to Sir Thomas, among the paintings that arrived from England in 1617 were portraits of Lady Montagu and Lady Molyneux and a picture representing Venus and Satyr. The East India Company sent many other allegorical pictures to Jahangir. Among those which particularly pleased him was one representing Diana. Many of the European pictures were copied by Jahangir's court artists.

The splendor of the Mughal court and with it Mughal portraiture reached its height under Shah Jahan (1627-1658), son of Emperor Jahangir. Shah Jahan is perhaps best known for the architectural masterpieces erected during his reign. His palace-fort at Delhi and the magnificent Taj Mahal at Agra, a mausoleum for his beloved wife Mumtaz-Mahal, are among the most famous buildings of his period. The official court ceremonials, embassies and single portraits of the Emperor and his nobles reflect the luxurious court life of the era. From a technical point of view these portraits are master-

pieces of perfection. The faces are delicately modeled and rendered with minute details which are of unbelievable fineness. The brilliant jewel-like colors add to the splendor of these miniature paintings which were made for albums of the Emperor and his nobles. Some of the artists working in in the Jahangir period continued under Shah Jahan. Among the court artists we find the names of Govardhan, Mir Hashim, Hunhar, Bichitr, Anup Chatar, Abul Hasan, Balchand and others. The Christian influence, although less pronounced than under Jahangir, was tolerated by Jahan. Following the tradition of the school of Jahangir several portraits of Shah Jahan show angels or cherubs in the clouds, holding various attributes, and glorifying the Emperor.

Dara Shikoh, Shah Jahan's eldest son, was like his father, a collector of paintings and a patron of the arts. Some of the painters like Manobar worked for this unfortunate prince, whose artistic taste is preserved in an album of miniatures in the India Office library, London. According to an inscription, this album was presented to his dearest and nearest friend, the Lady Nadirah Begum, in the year 1051 (A. D. 1641-42).

Aurangzib (1658-1707), the youngest son of Shah Jahan, defeated his brother and usurped the throne. Aurangzib was less interested in arts in general and particularly hated music. It is even reported that this austere monarch, who was a strict Muslim, ordered the destruction of certain works of art. The splendor and luxuries of the court of Shah Jahan were abolished by Aurangzib and the palace was stripped of all its rich furniture. The artists were gradually leaving the royal patronage and were forced to look for other work.

After the death of Aurangzib Mughal artists continued to paint official and private portraits which, although lacking the technical perfection of the earlier schools, were nevertheless of good quality. The artists of the eighteenth century, depending now on the support of other than aristocratic circles, turned to genre paintings, of which quite a number may be seen in museums and private collections of India and the West.

Contemporary with the Mughal schools of painting, several Hindu schools, attached to Rajput courts, flourished in Rajputana, in the Punjab Himalayas in northern India, and also in the Deccan. Coomaraswamy, who first called the attention of the world to these Rajput paintings, divided them according to their origin into groups: The Rajasthani (from Rajputana, and part of Central India) and Pahari (from the Punjab Himalayas). These main groups have been further subdivided into many local schools, which have their own peculiar characteristics. Local schools of the Rajasthani group existed in Bundelkand, Jodhpur, Udaipur, Bukaner, Jaipur and also Malwa. The Pahari school is subdivided into Jamu, Kangra, Basohli, Guler and Garhwal. There are many theories as to the origin of Rajput painting. Some regard the Gujarati school of the end of the sixteenth century as the source of Rajput paintings. Of particular importance are illustrations in the Gujarati manuscript (the Uttaradhyana Sutra) dated 1591 published by Norman Brown. Most of the known early Rajput paintings of the Rajasthani school should be dated to about 1600. They differ in style and subject matter from those of the Mughal school. The early Rajasthani paintings from Rajputana have many characteristics of native art. While the Mughal school of painting was chiefly concerned with portraiture and recording of historical events, the Rajput schools derived their subject matter chiefly from legends and mythology, including Indian epics. The most popular subjects of the

Rajput paintings were the love stories of Krishna. The Rajput school produced also some interesting portraits of local princes, but they are usually artistically inferior to those of the Mughal schools.

Many fine examples of the early Rajasthani school illustrate the Ragmala poems, comprising thirty-six Ragas and Raginis or musical modes. Symbolic love stories of Krishna and his consort Radha are used to illustrate the various Ragmala themes. The early Regmala illustrations reveal a broad decorative style with vivid bright colors. Some of them show Mughal influence, others, like the Ragmala paintings in the Boston Museum, Metropolitan Museum and Freer Gallery in Washington, are free of this influence.

The close relation between the Rajputs and the Mughal Emperors Akbar and Jahangir is well known. The influence of Hindu painters and their role in the development of the Mughal school have been already referred to. Strong Mughal influence is apparent in a group of illustrations to the MS. of Rasikapriya of Kesava Das, written in Hindu in Nogari characters. Rasikapriya is a treatise on rhetoric and literary analysis of emotional situations. The hero and heroine are represented by Krishna and Radha, with Sakhi or Dutika, the messenger, as go-between. The author, Kesava Das, was from Orcha in Bundelkand whose rajahs had close relations with the Mughal court. He wrote Rasikapriya in 1591, but the illustrations now in Boston and the Metropolitan Museum of Art are most probably from the beginning of Jahangir's reign (1604-1627), as the cool color scheme indicates. Little Mughal influence is seen in a group of Rasikapriya illustrations in several American Museums and private collections. They are painted in vivid colors and are related to miniatures of the Rasikapriya dated 1634, in the National Museum, New Delhi, which W. G. Archer attributes to the Malwa school. Several important Rajput schools of painting developed during the 18th century in several states of the Pahari mountains of the Punjab Himalayas. The best known are the Kangra, Basohli, Guler, Jamu and Garhwal. Other local schools existed in Chamba, Kulu, Punch and other smaller places. After the decline of the Mughal Empire these Rajput states gained their independence. In Kangra under the patronage of Rajah Sansar Chand (1775-1823) the art of painting flourished in the latter part of the 18th and early part of the 19th century.

A distinctive type of Pahari paintings has been identified with the hill state of Basohli. The Basohli artists developed a style with rich coloring and great elegance of figures. The early Basohli school, of about 1695, is best known from the series of Nayikas in the Boston Museum, illustrating the emotional state of lovers. The 18th century Basohli paintings continued the vigorous style of that school, which is quite different from the poetical type of paintings of the Kangra school with its numerous representations of love stories of Krishna. A characteristic feature of the Kangra school is the linear style which emphasizes gracefully flowing rhythmic lines and beautiful feminine forms.

MAURICE S. DIMAND

I

MUZMAHIL TREATING THE SORCERERS

A painting from the manuscript of Dastan i-Amir Hamza
or the Romance of the Amir Hamza
Mughal school, period of Akbar, about 1575
Brooklyn Museum, New York

The Dastan i-Amir Hamza is a Persian work narrating the adventures of the hero Hamza, an uncle of Muhammad. The first part of the Romance deals with the story of the Persian king Anurshiwan and the history of Hamza's youth, his adventures and expeditions against the king of Ceylon, the Emperor of Rum (Byzance) and others. The second part narrates the heroic deeds and campaigns against the unbelievers, the Franks, and the Persian Fire and Sun Worshippers. The last section is devoted to the exploits of the Giant Zumurud Shah and an army of sorcerers. The Romance ends with the battle of Uhud, in which Hamza is killed.

Although the work was begun under Humayun it was actually completed in the time of Akbar who was very fond of the Romance of Amir Hamza containing 360 tales in twelve volumes. He used to recite some of the tales in the female apartments like a story teller. Each volume contained one hundred folios, and each folio had two paintings. Fifty painters were engaged to illustrate this great work. The illustrations, measuring $28\frac{1}{2}$ in. $\times 22$ in., were painted on cotton cloth. From the original number of 1400 illustrations only a fraction survived. Sixty are in the Industrial Art Museum in Vienna, twenty-five in the Victoria and Albert Museum, London, and about sixteen in American Museums and collections. The paintings of the Amir Hamza show all the characteristic features of the early Akbar school in which Persian and Hindu elements appear side by side.

II

THE IMAM OF BAGHDAD BROUGHT BEFORE THE CALIPH ON A CHARGE OF HERESY

Work of Basawan
Page from the manuscript of Tarikh-i-Alfi or History of the World
Mughal school, period of Akbar, about 1595
Freer Gallery of Art, Washington, D. C.

This miniature painting by Basawan comes from the original manuscript of the History of the World prepared for the Emperor Akbar in 1582-88 and revised in 1594. The miniatures were painted by different artists working for Akbar. This one is attributed to Basawan, who was listed by the historian Abul Fazl as one of the foremost painters. He was particularly praised for his backgrounding, drawing of features, distribution of colors, and portrait painting. His style, known from several manuscripts of the Akbar period, is more individual than that of other contemporary artists. Of interest in miniatures of Tarikh-i-Alfi is the ingenious combination of text and illustrations.

از رحلت سید بشر علیه التحیة من الملک الاکبر در طالقان خراسان
محمد بن القسم بن محمد بن عمر و بن علی بن الحسین بن علی بن ابی طالب علیه الصلوة و السلام

III

BAHRAM GUR AND FITNAH BEFORE THE HUNT

Page from a manuscript of the Khamsa or Five Poems by Amir Khusrau Dihlavi
Mughal school, period of Akbar, about 1595
Metropolitan Museum of Art, Gift of Alexander Smith Cochran, 1913

Amir Khusrau of Delhi (1253-1325 A. D.), was an imitator of the Persian poet Nizami, the author of the well known Khamsa. The miniature illustrates an episode from the 5th book entitled Hasht Bahisht or Eight Paradises, narrating the eight loves of the Sasanian King Bahram Gur.

Bahram Gur's exploits as a hunter were favorite subjects of Persian artists through the ages. On his hunting trips, Bahram was often accompanied by his sweetheart and lute player Fitnah (Mischief), also called Azada. In the story most frequently illustrated in miniature paintings, Bahram Gur exhibits his skill to Fitnah by transfixing with an arrow the hoof of an ass to its ear.

This miniature depicts an episode before the hunt. Bahram Gur, resting in a mountainous landscape, is entertained by Fitnah, playing the lute. They are surrounded by various animals, enchanted by the music of Fitnah. The style is characteristic of the late Akbar period.

IV

KRISHNA HOLDING UP MOUNT GOVARDHANA

Page from a manuscript of the Razm-nama
(Persian translation of the Mahabharata)
Mughal school, period of Akbar, about 1600
Metropolitan Museum of Art, Gift of Edward C. Moore, Jr., 1928

The great Indian epic, the Mahabharata, deals with the battles between two families, the Pandavas and Kauravas. The figure of Krishna, the incarnation of the Hindu god, Vishnu, who allied himself with the Pandavas, plays a leading role in the episodes of this saga. The miniature illustrates one of Krishna's miracles, the lifting of the mountain Govardhana. Krishna taught the people of Braj to worship the woods and hills, and especially Mount Govardhana. When Krishna assumed the form of a mountain god and received all offerings, Indra, King of Heaven and Lord of Rain, was enraged at the loss of his honor and gifts. He sent for the King of the Clouds and ordered him to rain over Braj and Govardhana till both were swept away. Then the people of Braj asked Krishna to bring the mountain to protect them from the pouring rain. Krishna filled Govardhana with the burning heat of his energy and lifted him upon his little finger, and all the people of Braj, with their cows, took shelter under the mountain, looking at Krishna in utter astonishment.

This miniature represents the last stage of the miracle, the actual lifting of the mountain, and the admiration of the people of Braj. The figures of the cowherds, holy men, women and children are realistically rendered and seem to be actual portraits of Hindus as seen by a Mughal artist of the sixteenth century.

IV

V

MAGPIES

Probably by Mansur
Leaf in an album of Jahangir assembled between 1608-1618
Mughal school, period of Jahangir
State Library, Berlin, West Germany

This fine miniature painting of two magpies in a rocky landscape, could be attributed to Mansur the most celebrated animal painter at the court of Jahangir. He was greatly admired by the Emperor, who bestowed upon him the title Nadir al Azr or the Marvel of the Age. Jahangir was greatly interested in the appearance and habits of animals and birds. He often commissioned Mansur and other artists to paint various specimens, among them the turkey-cock which is described by Jahangir in his memoirs. The turkey-cock and hen were brought from Goa by Jahangir's emissary in the year 1612.

VI

SCENE AT THE GATE OF A TOWN

(Dated 1617-18)
Leaf in an album of Jahangir Mughal school, period of Jahangir (1605-1628)
State Library, Berlin, West Germany

This album of Jahangir was assembled for his library and the miniatures painted in the period between 1608 and 1618. Beside historical portraits, the album contains several genre scenes and beautiful borders. Among the painters responsible for some of the miniatures in the album are: Govardhan, Bishandas, Manohar, Nadir az-Zaman (Abul-Hasan), Minushihr and Kesavadas.

Several miniatures in the album were directly inspired by Persian paintings. To this group belongs " The scene at the gate," which in its representation of daily life, shows the influence of such Persian painters as Ustad Muhammadi and Mir Sayyid Ali. Among the artists of Jahangir's library who painted in " Persian style " are Muhammad, or Aka Riza, Farrukh Beg and others.

VII

PORTRAIT OF SHAH JAHAN ON HORSEBACK

by Bhag
Leaf from an album of Shah Jahan (1628-1658)
Mughal school, period of Shah Jahan, about 1630
Metropolitan Museum of Art, purchased partly from Rogers Fund
and partly from gift of Kevorkian Foundation, 1955

This portrait is from an album assembled for Shah Jahan, whose name appears on a richly illuminated page. Another illuminated page of the same album bears the " ex libris " of his son and successor Aurangzib (1658-1707). Forty leaves from this album are now in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, nine in the Freer Gallery in Washington. Most of the miniature paintings in the album are official portraits of Mughal rulers, princes, and court officials. Many of the paintings were made during the time of Shah Jahan's father, Jahangir (1605-1628), by famous court artists such as Govardhan, Abu'l Hasan, Mansur, Manohar, Balchand, Hashim, Bishandas and others.

VIII

RADHA INVITING KRISHNA TO HER PAVILLION

Illustration to the Rasikapriya of Kesava Das
Central India, Malwa school, about 1634
Seattle Art Museum, Eugene Fuller Memorial collection

Rasikapriya was written by Kesava Das of Orcha in Bundelkhand in 1591. It is a work on rhetoric and literary analysis of emotional situations in which the hero and heroine are represented by Krishna and Radha. There are several copies of this work in existence, illustrations of which are now in various collections of India, Europe and America. The style and vivid colors of the Seattle miniature recall very similar illustrations in a copy of a Rasikapriya dated 1634 in the National Museum of New Delhi. These series, which were originally attributed to Rajasthan, are now assigned by W. G. Archer to Malwa in Central India. Here a school of painting existed as early as 1500. According to Archer the series of Rasikapriya illustrations of 1634 are similar in style to later paintings definitely executed in Malwa.

IX

RAMAKALI RAGINI, WIFE OF SRI RAGA HOLDS A CUP OF MILK TO A COBRA

Illustration of a musical mode. Pahari, Basohli school, about 1700
Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1918, New York City

Basohli, a Rajput state in the Punjab Hills, developed towards the end of the eighteenth century a local style of painting. It is a highly sophisticated style with characteristic profiles of faces and brilliant colors. A manuscript made for Raja Kirpal Pal of Basohli was illustrated by the painter Devayani in 1695.

X

KRISHNA QUELLING THE SNAKE KALIYA

Illustration to the Bhagavata Purana
Pahari, Garhwal school, about 1785
Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, 1927

Among the many miraculous deeds of Krishna, the incarnation of Vishnu, is the quelling of the snake Kaliya in the whirlpool of the river Jumna. Nanda and Yasoda with gopas (cowherds) and gopis (cowgirls) stand to the right on the edge of the whirlpool in fear of Krishna's fate. Krishna subdued the great snake and is dancing on its many heads, while the beautiful naginis or consorts of Kaliya beg for mercy. Krishna finally spares Kaliya's life and banishes him to a distant island.

The miniature shows the elegant and expressive style of the Garhwal school in the Punjab hills.

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